AMENDMENT

Please amend the claims as follows. Deleted matter is indicated with strikethroughs and bolded text and new text is indicated with bolded and underlined text. These claims supersede all previous versions. No new matter is added by any of the changes.

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~A medical article~~ An implantable or insertable medical device comprising a release region, said release region comprising (a) a polymeric carrier comprising a first polymer and (b) drug loaded nanoparticles dispersed within said polymeric carrier, said drug loaded nanoparticles comprising: silicate particles comprising a layered silicate material; and a first therapeutic agent, wherein the first therapeutic agent is structurally associated with the silicate particles in that the first therapeutic agent occupies spaces between adjacent layers of the silicate material of each silicate particle to form a depot for the first therapeutic agent.

2. (Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1, wherein said first therapeutic agent is a hydrophilic therapeutic agent and said first polymer is a hydrophobic polymer.

3. (Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 2, wherein said medical ~~article~~ device is a vascular medical device, wherein said first therapeutic agent is halofuginone·HBr, and wherein said first polymer is a polyolefin-polyvinylaromatic block copolymer.

4. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1, wherein said first therapeutic agent is a hydrophobic therapeutic agent and said first polymer is a hydrophilic polymer.

5. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1, further comprising a second polymer.

6. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 5, wherein said polymeric carrier further comprises said second polymer.

7. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 5, wherein said nanoparticles further comprise said second polymer.

8. (Withdrawn and Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 7, wherein said second polymer is hydrophobic and said first polymer is hydrophilic.

9. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 7, wherein said second polymer is hydrophilic and said first polymer is hydrophobic.

10. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 9, wherein said medical article is a vascular medical device, wherein said first therapeutic agent is halofuginone·HBr, wherein said first polymer is a polyolefin-polyvinylaromatic block copolymer, and wherein said second polymer is a hydrophilic polymer selected from hyaluronic acid, collagen, heparin, chrondroitin sulfate, phosphoro choline, dextran, and polyethylene oxide.

11. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1, wherein said polymeric carrier further comprises said first therapeutic agent.

12. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1, further comprising a second therapeutic agent.

13. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 12, wherein said polymeric carrier further comprises said second therapeutic agent.

14. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 13, wherein said first therapeutic agent is hydrophilic and said second therapeutic agents is hydrophobic.

15. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 12, wherein said nanoparticles further comprise said second therapeutic agent.

16. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 15, wherein said first and second therapeutic agents are hydrophilic.

17. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1, wherein said release region is disposed over at least a portion of a medical article substrate.

18. Cancelled.

19. (Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 18, wherein said ~~implantable or insertable medical~~ device is adapted for implantation or insertion into the coronary or peripheral vasculature.

20. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 19, wherein said ~~implantable or insertable medical~~ device is adapted for implantation or insertion into the esophagus, trachea, colon, biliary tract, urinary tract, prostate or brain.

21. (Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 19, wherein said ~~implantable or insertable medical~~ device is selected from a catheter, a guide wire, a balloon, a filter, a stent, a stent graft, a vascular graft, a vascular patch, a shunt, an electrode, a heart valve, a circulation pump, and an intraluminal paving system.

22. (Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 19, wherein said therapeutic agent is selected from an anti-thrombotic agent, an anti-proliferative agent, an anti-inflammatory agent, an anti-migratory agent, an agent affecting extracellular matrix production and organization, an antineoplastic agent, an anti-mitotic agent, an anesthetic agent, an anti-coagulant, a vascular cell

growth promoter, a vascular cell growth inhibitor, a cholesterol-lowering agent, a vasodilating agent, and an agent that interferes with endogenous vasoactive mechanisms.

23. (Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1, wherein said layered silicate material comprises synthetic or naturally occurring smectite.

24. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1, wherein said layered silicate material comprises a natural or synthetic silicate material selected from bentonite, aliettite, vermiculite, swinefordite, montmorillonite, yakhontovite, nontronite, beidellite, volkonskoite, stevensite, hectorite, saponite, laponite, sauconite, magadiite, kenyaite and ledikite.

25. (Currently Amended) A method of releasing a therapeutic agent to a patient comprising: (a) providing the medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1; and (b) contacting said medical article with a patient.

26. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A method of providing the medical ~~article~~ device of claim 1 comprising:

providing a release-region-forming fluid comprising (a) said first polymer species and (b) said drug loaded nanoparticles; and

applying said release-region-forming fluid to a medical article substrate or to a releasable template.

New Claims:

Please add new Claims 27 and 28 as follows:

27. (New) The medical device of claim 1 wherein the silicate particles have a maximum cross-sectional length between 30 to 500 nm and spacing between the adjacent layers within the silicate particles is in the range of 5-20Å.

28. (New) The medical device of claim 2 wherein said hydrophobic polymer is selected from the group consisting of olefin polymers and copolymers, styrene polymers and copolymers, halogenated hydrocarbon polymers and copolymers, vinyl polymers and copolymers, polymers and copolymers of acrylic acid esters, polymers and copolymers of methacrylic acid esters, polycarbonates, polyimides, polyetheretherkeones, polyamides, polyvinylaceteates, polysulfones, polyethersulfones, polyesters, polyurethanes and siloxane-urethane copolymers, and polyorganosiloxanes.